

JULY 2005

Facets

F O R W O M E N

Women who write

Veronica Fowler
balances creativity
and home

Books to
motivate
your fitness
side

Summer
salads:
Dress
them up



Notes from the Newsroom

by Rebecca A. Petersen

I can't tell you how many people have asked me, "How do you write everyday?"

I tell them that I've been writing daily for about six years and that it's a learned behavior.

To which they usually respond,

"I can't write."

"Writing is really hard for me."

"I could write papers in college, but I can't write anything good."

To which I usually respond, "If you've read any of my stories, you could say the same about me."

To prove the point that writ-

ing improves with practice, I found the first story that I wrote for The Tribune. On June 2, 1999, Gov. Tom Vilsack toured Youth and Shelter Services' Youth Recovery House on Kellogg Avenue to lobby for increased funding for addiction recovery.

Here's what I came up with for the story's lead in the June 3 Tribune:

"After meeting with six children being treated for drug and alcohol addiction at the Story County Youth and Special Services home in Ames Wednesday, Iowa Gov. Tom Vilsack said he was impressed with what he saw."

Icky, huh? This 33-word lead

breaks journalism conventions and is all around bad.

So the lesson here is that good writing is learned. It's taken me six years to work on tighter writing. It will take 60 more years before I'm happy. But that's OK.

The July Facets is intended to inspire us to write. You'll meet Veronica Fowler, a recovering newspaper reporter who is a popular gardening writer. Fowler's lush gardens shouldn't overshadow her ability to write for audiences ranging from novice to expert.

You'll also meet three more Ames women who write. By no means is this a comprehensive list of the talent in Ames. We hope

they inspire you.

For some reason, Fowler doesn't consider herself a real writer. We politely disagree. Her stack of books and articles prove she has a way with words.

July's edition was inspired by former Facets Editor Frances Wilke, who left the magazine to write a collection of stories about raising an autistic son. She's finding the going tough. To which I respond, keep it up.

Grab a pen, paper, keyboard, palm pilot, Blackberry, anything. Try it. Then review it. And try it some more. You'll be surprised what you have to share. ♦

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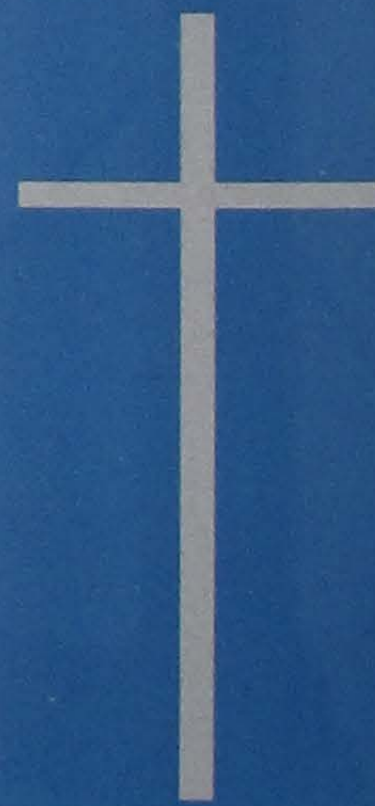
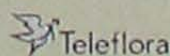
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Facet > 1. One of the flat surfaces cut on a gemstone.

2. The particular angle from which something is considered.

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IN THIS ISSUE

- | | | | |
|----|------------------------------------------|----|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2 | Notes from the newsroom | 12 | Cover Story: Veronica Fowler turns passion into writing career |
| 4 | Facets faces | | |
| 5 | Your Say: Nancy Lewis likes being old | 15 | Get rid of skin spots |
| 6 | Mother and Child | 16 | What do we read next? |
| 8 | In the garden: Answers to your questions | 19 | Finances: Beware of fraud |
| 10 | Fitness: Books to get you motivated | 20 | Food bites: Get dressed up this summer |
| | | 23 | Hue & Cry: For the love of books |

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**“Grow old along with me!
The best is yet to be,
The last of life, for which the
first was made...”**

—Robert Browning

Editor's Note: Portions of this article originally appeared in “Living Out Loud,” an E-zine operated by Nicky Mendenhall, a licensed marriage and family therapist in West Des Moines. Sign up for the E-zine at www.mendenhall.moonfruit.com

By Nancy Lewis

I like being old. There, I said it.
I LIKE BEING OLD! SO
THERE!

Every decade of my life has been better than the one before. I was an uncomfortable child and a very uncomfortable adolescent. Marriage, motherhood and employment all provided challenges that made me feel inadequate. But when I reached my 50th birthday, I discovered with delight that, as an “older woman,” I didn’t have to conform any more. No more pantyhose unless I wanted to wear them. Nobody expected me to be fashionable any longer, or up-to-date in any other way for that matter. I felt free to start being myself.

As I turn 72, I’m enjoying retirement. I like having doors held open by younger people. It’s OK for me to move more slowly; people expect it. I’ve never been good at hurrying and now I don’t have to be. (I don’t yet, thank goodness, need a wheelchair to get through the airport, but the travel agent no longer argues about my need for a little more time between flights.)

Last year I bought a Toyota Prius, a gasoline and electric-powered car. It took me a month to learn to drive it. The dashboard display is high tech. When I push the “start” button, there’s no engine noise at first. It won’t let me drive forward unless all the

doors are closed. The car is smarter than I am! I love my Prius, and I’m glad I had the time to adjust to it.

I did very little gardening when I was younger, and I didn’t enjoy it much. Now I have a passion for growing daffodils and coleus, and I’ve started to appreciate daylilies. None of these needs much care. Other people do the hard work, while I enjoy the planning and the blooming.

My diet restrictions are no longer a social problem. In earlier years sometimes friends and family were hurt or angry because I couldn’t eat their homemade apple pie or drink a fancy wine. Now no one is surprised and most people understand. Also, doctors are more concerned about people over 70 who lose weight. I no longer dread what my doctor might say about a couple of extra pounds.

I forget things, which has pluses and minuses. I may forget

to take along my grocery list or forget to look at it once I’m at the store. But I also forget that someone has been rude or has ignored me. As another old person says, “It’s harder to hold grudges.”

Clothing is a challenge. It’s difficult to find things that fit my body well, and all the styles seem to be designed for people under 20. But I have time to hunt around. I order from catalogs, and the problem of locating a dress to wear to a wedding can start a conversation with any other older woman!

Two years ago my congregation started a book group. I had never thought that I would want to read books selected by other people, and I haven’t always enjoyed what I’ve read, but it is fun to share our thoughts. Sometimes a book really speaks to me. Sometimes I’m the only one in the group that it speaks to, even though someone else chose it. I’m a generation

older than anyone else in the group, and it’s healthy for me to hear the feelings and ideas of the younger ones.

I can say “no” more easily, and people accept it. Sometimes I say “no” just because I don’t want to do whatever it is. I’m more likely to listen rather than jump in with an opinion, and I’m happy for the younger ones to make the decisions and plans.

I was glad to hand the family Thanksgiving dinner over to my daughter-in-law last November. She enjoyed the cooking; I enjoyed the peaceful visit. I’m starting to give away my nice possessions. I accept that there are places I will never visit, books I will never get around to reading.

Being old is a blessing. When you get here, I’ll welcome you. ♦

Nancy Lewis has lived in Ames since 1957. Before retirement, Lewis was a multi-faceted career woman.

Mother & Child

"Parents can only give good advice or put them on the right paths, but the final forming of a person's character lies in their own hands."

- Anne Frank

By Malissa Rader

My daughter is nearing a developmental milestone this month — riding her bicycle without training wheels. I can still vividly recall my own father removing my training wheels and the feeling of accomplishment I had when I achieved that goal.

A bicycle, a child's first vehicle, is a sense of pride, and a symbol of independence and freedom. Independence? Freedom?

Now I'm wondering why I ever had my husband remove those training wheels from our youngest daughter's bicycle!

Of course, there were a lot of steps in getting to this point. My daughter first learned pedaling skills with the aid of training wheels. Upon acquiring these skills, we removed her training wheels and now she is working on the skill of balancing while pedaling. Her dad and I have been running alongside her, holding the seat, and letting go at just

the right moment, but always prepared to catch her in case of a fall.

The time soon will come when we need to completely let go and let her give it a try on her own. I've prepared myself that there will be numerous falls while acquiring this skill, but her dad and I will be not far behind to comfort her and encourage her to try again.

It is never easy to watch our children fall, but it is an important part of learning and growing

up. As parents, our roles are not always clear. Sometimes we should clear the path for our children and do what we can to prevent the fall. But we can never fully shelter children from life, nor should we.

At other times, it is just as important to allow our children to experience those falls, skinned knees and all. It is through those experiences that children learn and grow and develop. By allowing our children to experience life for themselves, we act as mentors

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Michaela Rader and her pink bike.

for them, guiding them through tough times and playing an active role in their lives. To shelter them is to deprive them of true-life experiences, which they will eventually have to face.

They need those prior experiences from which to draw conclusions and to make educated decisions when the time comes. Most of us took a similar path when we learned to walk. We didn't let falling down keep us from eventually mastering the skill of walking. We picked ourselves up and kept on trying until we eventually figured it out. We had parents and grandparents along the way encouraging us and cheering us on to go further and further with each step.

Isn't this so much like life? You and I may fall many times, but if we don't give up, we'll eventually become bike riders. We all need that person beside us, letting us give things a try and yet, encouraging us when needed. Each of us needs someone to help us stand back up when we fall down, wipe away our tears, and cheer us on towards our goals. Although my heart aches with each step or pedal my children take towards independence, I look forward to that same sense of pride and accomplishment as they reach adulthood. ♦

Malisa Rader is the parent coordinator for Iowa State University's Child Development Laboratory School.

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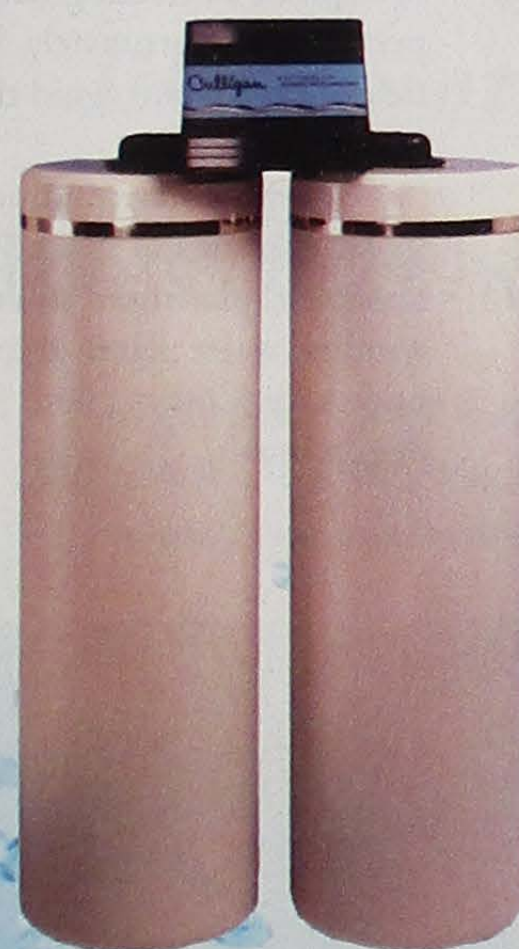


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Garden gaffes?

Editor's note: Ask the Expert is written by Iowa State University Extension horticulture specialists. The questions are chosen from those submitted by users of the ISU Hortline.

Buds form on my peonies, but don't open. Why?

There are several possible explanations why peony buds may fail to open.

Peonies bloom best in full sun. In partial to heavy shade, plants are weak and may not be able to supply adequate food to the developing buds. As a result, the undernourished buds don't develop fully. Peonies growing in partial to heavy shade should be transplanted to a sunny site in September.

Fungal diseases, such as Botrytis blight, may infect peony buds. Infected buds turn brown or black and fail to open. Fungal diseases are most common during cool,

wet, spring weather.

Sanitation is the most effective means of controlling Botrytis blight and other peony diseases. Cut off the dead debris at ground level and remove it from the area in late fall or late winter.

The flower buds may have been damaged by a late frost or freeze. While the plants themselves can tolerate a freeze, the buds are more susceptible to freezing temperatures. Unfortunately, little can be done to avoid this problem.

Extremely dry conditions in early spring are another possible explanation. In dry weather, water plants deeply once a week during bud development.

When should I stop harvesting asparagus?

Discontinue harvesting of well-established asparagus by early June in southern Iowa and mid-June in northern areas of the state. If harvested over a longer period, the plants may be weakened, which can seriously reduce future yields. Allow the asparagus stalks to grow after the last harvest.

How can I prevent rabbit damage to the vegetable garden?

The most effective way to prevent damage to the vegetable garden is to enclose it with a chicken wire fence. A 2-foot-tall roll of chicken wire should be

adequate. The fence should be supported by strong wooden stakes or metal posts. The bottom 2-to-3 inches of the fence should be buried in the ground to prevent rabbits from crawling underneath it.

When can I remove the foliage on my tulips and daffodils?

The foliage of spring-flowering bulbs should not be removed until it has turned yellow and begun to die back. The length of time it takes the foliage to die back depends on bulb type, weather and cultural practices. Most tulips and daffodils don't die back



until late June or early July. Premature removal of plant foliage reduces plant vigor and bulb size, resulting in fewer flowers the following spring. After the foliage has yellowed, it can be safely cut off at ground level and discarded.

Is there anything that can be done to stop toadstools from coming up in the yard?

Mushrooms (toadstools) are the reproductive or fruiting structures, of fungi. Their appearance usually indicates the presence of decaying tree stumps or roots in the soil.

While mushrooms in the lawn are somewhat annoying, most cause no harm to the turf grass. There is nothing that can be applied to the ground that will

prevent them from emerging. Simply mow them off or rake and discard them when they appear. Eventually, the mushrooms will stop emerging with the arrival of warmer, drier conditions.

Unfortunately, this is probably only a temporary reprieve. It's likely the toadstools will periodically appear over several years during favorable environmental conditions. Their periodic appearances will end when the stump or roots in the soil have been completely broken down by the fungi. ♦

Got gardening questions? Contact the Hortline at (515) 294-3108 (Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to Noon and 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.) or e-mail us at hortline@ias-tate.edu.

Mary Helen's
cookery

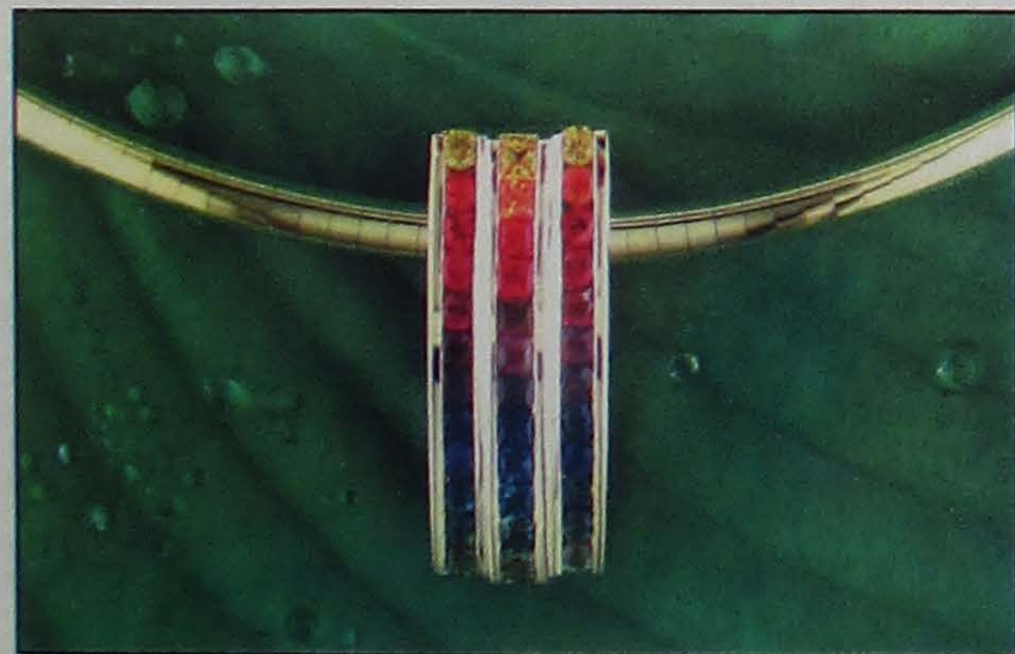
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fit

to READ

By Debra Atkinson

More than most would agree that warm, balmy breezes and cloudless skies beckon us outdoors and into more active lifestyles.

If you find yourself inspired to make this the season that you finally get fit, you may be looking for guidance.

If you're struggling with motivation or trying to figure out the right formula to get and stay on track with real lifestyle changes, I don't recommend too much contemplation. After all, thinking about it for so long is what got you to where you are now. It's time for action.

Nonetheless, it's as necessary to change what's between the ears as it is to change the rest of you. Reinforce movement by understanding the how and why of it all. Add some fitness reads to your pool bag this summer.

You might want to pick up Pamela Peeke's "Body for Life for Women: A Woman's Plan for Physical and Mental Transformation," if you are a

woman with a traditional reluctance to focus on her own needs. This is the reason, Peeke suggests, that women often have a difficult time justifying their fitness time.

Real-life client stories bring her fitness plan to life. Although this book isn't like the original "Body for Life" quick-plan approach, it does offer good, basic information on women's fitness.

Peeke offers additional insights for women over 40 on the relationship between stress and weight gain in "Fight Fat After Forty." As a physician, Peeke is not only professionally qualified, but also over 40 and a recently self-made athlete. The bottom line between these covers is that you can't change your life with a few days of restriction and then go back to old habits. Diet, exercise and coping with stress all play a part.

For a very down-to-earth fitness approach from one of the fitness industry's gurus, read "Go For Fit: The Winning Way to Fat Loss." Author Sherri Kwasnicki addresses behavior change, as any experienced personal trainer

would.

Changing your thoughts at the same time you tackle the rest of the positive habits that will assist you in pursuit of better health will make all the difference between another attempt and success, Kwasnicki said.

If you or a friend is concerned about spending more time at the gym and less time with usual pleasures and pastimes, you might find "Exercise or Obsession," by Karen Asp, insightful. The book focuses on the fine line between positive and negative addictions to exercise and health. Asp is a freelance writer who frequently contributes to health and fitness periodicals.

Last but not least is the issue of making peace with food. Have you done it? Is anyone completely successful? Sorting through the landmine of what to eat or avoid is a challenge.

"Intuitive Eating" defines everyday eating principles that promote a healthy relationship with food. Authors Evelyn Tribole and Elyse Resch are both registered dietitians. You'll learn to

understand the importance of satisfaction, foods that nourish and nurture, and how to identify your biological hunger and honor it. As simple as it sounds, if you grew up in the happy plate club or have been told to wait until dinner, you've been conditioned not to listen to your body's needs. It's not too late to open up the conversation with yourself. This one is all about gut feeling.

Hopefully your success story begins at the end of any of these books. That's why the last recommendation on reading for fitness and health is to read over your own logbook or fitness journal.

Not keeping one? Start now. You'll discover some insights and find reasons to acknowledge successes you hadn't even noticed before. You'll better identify what works for you and what triggers a fall off of the wagon. Write your own happy ending. ♦

Debra Atkinson is a senior lecturer in Iowa State University's department of health and human performance and is a personal trainer at Ames Racquet and Fitness.

Behind every issue of Facets is a great group of Women!

Where are you?

Think you're too young or old?

You're wrong.

Think you're too inexperienced?

You're not.

Think you have nothing to say?

Let us decide.

Facets is accepting writing samples from Ames and Story County women.

Please submit 2 to 3 writing samples on issues of general interest to a female readership. You may also include a list of topics that you'd like to see covered in future issues.

Submit information to Rebecca A. Petersen at 232-2161, Ext. 348, rpetersen@amestrib.com or mail to 317 Fifth St., Ames, IA 50010.

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I'M IN
THE GARDEN

In full BLOOM

The former editor of Better Homes and Garden's "Flower Gardening" magazine, Veronica Fowler, right, is now a freelance writer and editor who has contributed to a variety of other gardening books and many magazines such as Better Homes and Gardens, Country Home, Horticulture and Garden Design.

A graduate of Iowa State University and a Master Gardener, she has lived in Ames for more than 20 years. She cultivates a varied garden of her own with her husband and three children, Andrew, 18; Kate, 15; and Will, 7.

photos by ANDREW RULLESTAD



Name: Veronica Lorson Fowler
Age: 43
Address: Ames
Occupation: Magazine and book writer and editor
Writing genre: Gardening article
What's your favorite book from your childhood?: "Thumbelina." "I must have checked it out of the Herington, Kansas library a million times."
Why do you write?: "Because I have no math skills."
What author would you most like to meet for dinner? "Annie Lamott. She'd be funny, kind, observant, have great taste in restaurants and I'd end up wanting her to be my best friend."
What's your advice for aspiring writers? "Read good stuff; write every day; hang out with interesting, articulate people who make you think and examine the world around you."
List of titles: "Gardening in Iowa," "All About Pools and Ponds," "Flower Gardening 1-2-3," "Gardening 1-2-3 (pending)"

By Rebecca A. Petersen
Staff Writer

A mound of special-ordered, double-shredded cypress mulch sits at the top of Veronica Fowler's driveway. One month ago, Fowler said, the pile was larger.

In between finishing a 10-chapter gardening book for The Home Depot, Fowler's found time to chip away at the spread and add a little bit more color to her luxurious gardens.

Her neighbors must be jealous of the Ames resident. Flowers and plants line the boulevard of her Cape Cod-styled house near Brookside Park. Cars slow and even stop to admire the vivid frontage of the white home on a small hill. The backyard is a kaleidoscope of colors and textures, with a fish pond and a "lilac fort" for her 7-year-old and the neighborhood kids.

The 43-year-old Kansas native spends the first part of her day in a bath robe, mostly writing about her passion, gardening. She can sit on her screened porch, reminiscent of, but more natural than, a Martha Stewart Living room.

"I don't even believe in God but wake up every day thanking God that I work at home," Fowler said.

Gone are the days of squealing police scanners, rumbling press starts and 5 a.m. wake-up calls for her commutes to publishing jobs with The Des Moines Register and Meredith Publishing Group.

Fowler is in her eighth year as a freelance writer. She estimates that 90 percent of her time is spent writing about gardens and gardening. The rest of her time, she writes about interior decorating, crafts and parenting.

Right now her 18-year-old son, who's home from college for the summer, is trying to reclaim his old bedroom and sleeping in what is now her office. So she's set up a temporary work space in the corner of her bedroom.

When she needs a really good Internet connection, she'll take her white Apple laptop to the living room, which is not surprisingly encased with books and plants.

"I am a nomad in my home."

A Cure for Morning Sickness

The first chapter of Fowler's biography starts with a true dislike of gardening.

"It was a chore," she said of growing up on a farm and being forced to work in the garden.

She'd watch Public Broadcasting Service's "The Victory Garden" and say, "That's so sad."

But 20 years ago, when she and her husband, Giles, moved into their home, Fowler decided to plant a 3-by-8-foot herb garden. They were bountiful, and so grew her passion for gardening. (Plus, the fresh air from digging

in the ground was good medicine for morning sickness!)

Year after year, Fowler planted more: salvia, marigolds and petunias, just to name a few. Then the Register asked her to write a gardening column. She was hesitant at first because she felt like a beginner, not because she couldn't write, but because she was unsure of her gardening skills.

Both blossomed. She kept learning by asking questions of Iowa State University Extension experts for the column. Soon Fowler was swapping tips with her sources. She learned that she had a knack for digging in the ground and could easily remember the scientific names of plant varieties. She had an artistic eye, fooling neighbors into thinking that the designs were copied from magazines, rather than her own.

In 1995, Fowler authored, "Gardening in Iowa," a regionalized month-by-month gardening book. A portion of the proceeds went to Reiman Gardens.

"It was something I would have liked so much when I started gardening," Fowler said.

With a growing family, including two children (and a third that would come later), Fowler left the Register's newsroom for Meredith as a garden editor. After two years, she realized that she still didn't have the time she wanted or needed with her family. In 1997, Fowler went into business for herself.

Eight years later, Fowler is too modest to consider herself an author.

"What I do is glorified technical writing," she said.

Still, she's amassed a collection of titles. She considers them baby steps to her final chapter. She's moved from newspapers to magazines to freelancing. The next step she would like is literature.

Like the past eight years, one could easily expect growing success.

Local women writers

SHERYL ST. GERMAIN



Name: Sheryl St. Germain

Age: 50

Address: Ames

Occupation: Writer, teacher

Writing genre: Creative nonfiction and poetry

What's your favorite book from your childhood?: "The Wizard of Oz"

Why do you write?: "It's a way of understanding and organizing the word around me. If I don't

write, I don't know who I am or where I am or what it all means."

What author would you most like to meet for dinner? Pablo Neruda

What's your advice for aspiring writers? "My advice would be to keep a journal and discipline yourself to write every day in the journal. If you don't exercise your writing muscles, they will atrophy, and a journal is the best way to keep in good writing shape. Almost all of my poems and essays had their first expressions in my journal."

List of titles (except academic): "Mask of Medusa," "Going Home," "Making Bread at Midnight," "How Heavy the Breath of God," "Je Suis Cadien," "Swamp Songs: the Making of an Unruly Woman."

REBECCA BURKE



Name: Rebecca Burke

Age: 49 (sigh)

Address: Ames

Occupation: Writer

Writing genre: educational writing; nonfiction; book reviews

What's your favorite book from your childhood?:

"Harriet the Spy"

Why do you write?: "Writing is now my full-time job. And by working from home, I see a lot more of my kids. On the other hand, by working from home, I

see a lot more of my kids! Seriously, the stuff I write requires tons of research, which I thoroughly enjoy. Educational publishers have an enormous need for high-quality materials, so I've got steady work and am living out the quiz category "Things You Should Have Learned in High School."

"But I still need to write things that get my creative juices flowing. Book reviews are a pleasure because you are paying homage to someone else's successful efforts, plus you get lots of free books. I've always been a writer — fiction, political satire, essays — it seems to be a mild compulsion."

What author would you most like to meet for dinner? "Margaret Atwood, though she'd scare the hell out of me. Would David Sedaris or Bill Bryson be too much to hope for?"

continued on page 14

continued from page 13

What's your advice for aspiring writers? "As I drilled into my creative writing students at Iowa State University, READ, READ, READ. Nothing else is more likely to help you become a better writer. It's also a security blanket: if I had not been a life-long reader, I would not have had the confidence to take on many of the projects I have done."

"If you're a working writer, you need a niche — mine is educational writing. Then everything you write adds to your bona fides in this area, and you build a client list accordingly. For other kinds of writing — fiction, poetry, essays, etc. — I think writers need to develop a point of view. You need a personal philosophy that gives backbone and argument to your writing. Anyone can

describe things accurately and even prettily. But what do you want to say to other people that is worth their time reading?"

List of titles (except academic): I'm currently finishing up a short story anthology, "The American Tradition: Short Stories from 1820-1920." In the last four years I've written apparatus for and edited 13 text books for secondary students — anthologies of world literature and multicultural literature, as well as Shakespeare plays. My book review column, "Literary Perks," is published in a women's publication, and recently I had a piece in a national health mag. To amuse myself and embarrass my children some day, I'm working on a travel memoir about our family's year in Amsterdam."

MARY HOWARD



with extreme dilemmas, and then watch them struggle toward a satisfying discovery — and triumph. Writing gives me hope."

What author would you most like to meet for dinner?

"Ian McEwan, author of 'Saturday,' and, before that, 'Atonement,' and others.

Because he creates entertaining characters and plots and at the same time tells stories full of important ideas. He's an intellectual writer who derives action from character the way the best novelists do. And he writes gorgeous sentences. I'd have a million questions for him."

What's your advice for aspiring writers? Write often.

Be stubborn and dedicated to your vision. Read your work out loud to yourself. Imagine your audience as you write. Edit mercilessly. Read a lot."

List of titles: "Discovering the Body," "Looking for the Hypnotist," "Baby, You Belong to Me," "Father Me, Father Me Not," "Cold Hands," "Long Trail of Blue," "Namesake, 1881." ♦

Name: Mary Howard

Age: 62

Address: Ames

Occupation: Author, retired academic adviser, Iowa State University's Art and Design Department

Writing genre: Psychological suspense

What's your favorite book from your childhood? "When We Were Very Young," by A.A. Milne, for its wonderful onomatopoeic rhythms and rhymes."

Why do you write? "I love the music of language and the way it can obscure or clarify what we think or feel. I like to make up flawed protagonists, face them

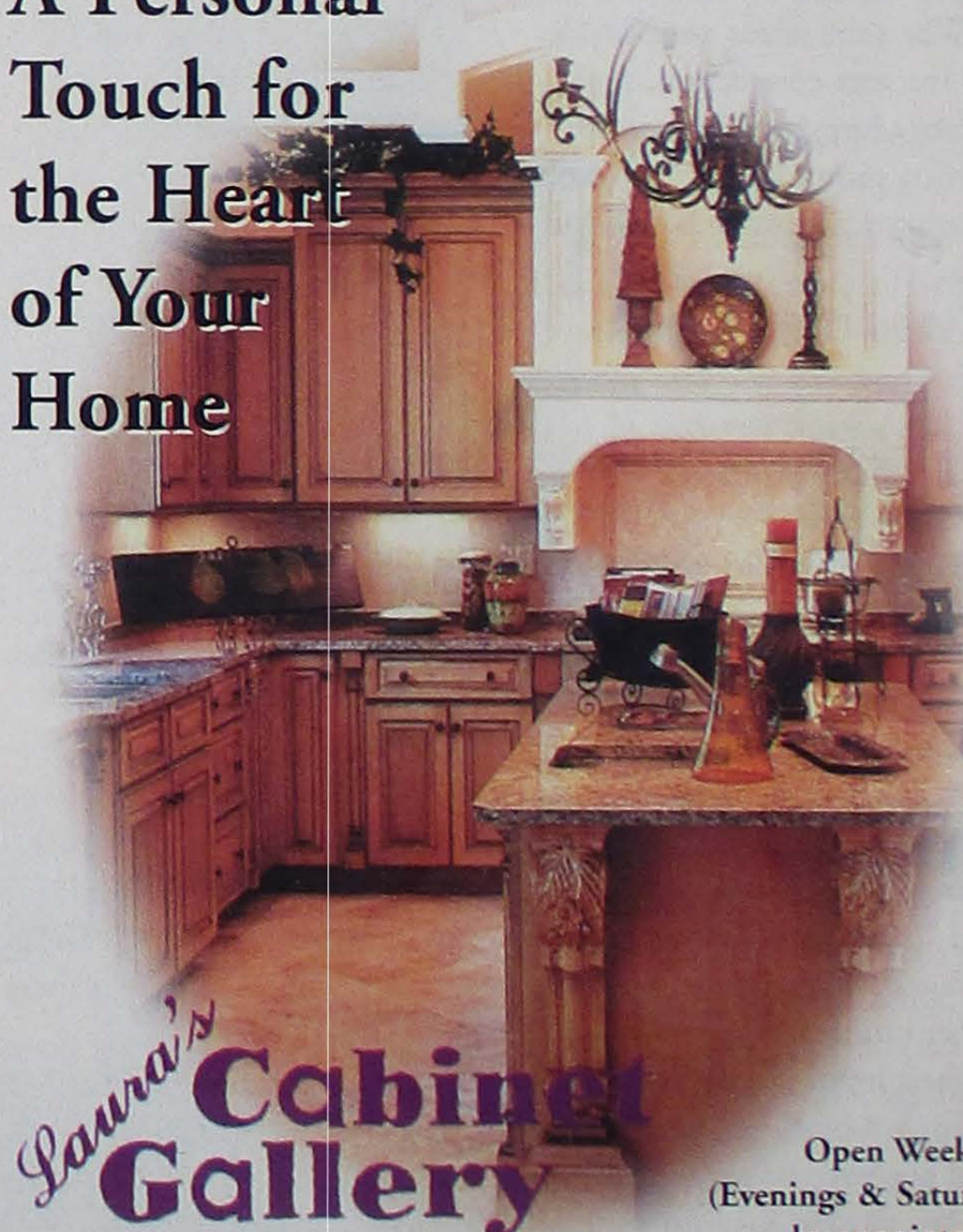


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How to stop seeing

By Charles W. Love

As summer activities get into full swing this month, we will all find ourselves outside much of the time. With the outdoor exposures, some will notice that annoying brown spots start cropping up to spoil their summer complexions.

Three common but harmless conditions lead to brown spots in sun-exposed areas of the skin. They are freckles, age spots and melasma.

Freckles

Freckles are small, tan-to-brown spots that are most common over the nose and cheeks. In fair-skinned individuals, they can be widespread on the face, arms trunk and legs. Although they can be considered cute in some individuals, many people do not like their freckles.

Age Spots

Age spots are the most common pigmentation problem that we see in my clinics. They are tan-to-dark brown irregular, pigmented spots on the skin. The cause of age spots is sun damage. For this reason, I prefer the term sunspots rather than age-spots. Although these spots are not precancerous, they are considered unsightly by many people. In fair-skinned individuals, they occur on the hands, arms and face. They can often make a person appear older than they want to appear.

Melasma

Also called the mask of pregnancy, melasma is an irregular pigmentation of the face that is most common in women. Pregnancy and birth control pills are associated

helpful. You can also use nonprescription bleaching formulas. The most effective bleaching creams contain Hydroquinone.

If the home remedies prove unsuccessful, a skin-

tion or allergic reactions to one of the ingredients in the bleaching cream.

If bleaching cream fails or if a person desires more rapid clearing, a chemical peel or a liquid nitrogen cryopeel is often effective. Both of these techniques will leave the skin irritated for a few days. After initial darkening of the treated spots, you will generally notice fading over one month. It is often necessary to repeat these procedures for optimum results.

For the most resistant cases, or for those who want the most rapid clearing, we do a combination of microdermabrasions and laser-like procedures. In microdermabrasion, the outer dead layer is carefully removed with a sterile diamond-tipped wand. The laser and intense pulsed light machines use high-energy light to break up the pigmentation so your skin can more easily remove the abnormal pigmentation. This combination of treatments has proven to be very successful from most people. You can apply cosmetics and return to normal duties immediately after this procedure. Your spots will be darker for one to two weeks and then a rapid improvement will occur.

Now you know how to stop seeing spots and enjoy a radiant summertime complexion. ♦

Charles W. Love is the medical director of Radiant Complexions Dermatology Clinic in Ames.

SPOTS.



with the condition in many instances. Women with darker complexions are more prone to melasma than fair-skinned individuals.

Treatments

There are a variety of treatment options available for pigmented spots. At the simplest level, protecting yourself from the sun with sunscreens and clothing is

care specialist can help restore a radiant summertime complexion with three levels of care.

The first level of care for brown spots is with a prescription bleaching cream. There are several effective ones available for your use. Bleaching cream requires two-to-three months to do a good job for most people. There is a small risk of irrita-

What do we read next?

By Frances Wilke

Keeping with the theme of women writers, I wanted to show how some famous authors have shared not just their work but their life stories. I must confess that I rarely read fiction anymore, but memoirs are my favorite genre. Most of these women wrote fiction for a living. Very few became wealthy from writing. All had stories to share. These are most memorable to me.

"Truth and Beauty,"
Ann Patchett, 2004.

This openhearted book tells of a devoted friendship Patchett has with Lucy Grealy, a talented writer ("An Autobiography of a Face," Harper Collins 1995) that she met at college. Grealy struggles with a disfiguring cancer, yet manages to be a lively spirited friend who almost wears out her welcome. Patchett's generous nature prevails but she cannot save her friend from her own destruction.

"A Room of One's Own,"
Virginia Woolfe, 1929.

This is an essay of why women should write, and what they need to do to get the job done. Woolfe pokes

fun at men, which might be considered politically incorrect in today's world. This should be read from an historical prospective, and stings as well as entertains.

"A House with Four Rooms,"
Rumer Godden, 1989.

This prolific English writer grew up in India between the two wars, and was abandoned by her husband with two children to support. She took up writing as a way to put food on the table. This book talks about her most productive time as a writer, recalling her years of returning to England at the end of World War II and her conversion to Roman Catholicism. This is her second autobiography. The first she wrote with her sister, Jon Godden, about their childhood in British-ruled India called "Two Under the Indian Sun."

"Time to Be in Earnest: A Fragment of Autobiography,"
P.D. James, 2001.

This amazing woman is my favorite author of all time. She is the modern day Agatha Christie with compassion and intelligence not seen or appreciated by today's publisher's quest for lust, blood and violence. As a young widow with

two daughters to support, James started writing after retiring from a civil servant's position in the forensics' office of the criminal justice departments.

She published her first novel in 1962. Her memoir covers only a year of her life, at age 77, and includes snippets of a past of English reticence and modesty. For the first time in public, she talks about her husbands struggle with mental illness and how she coped. She has a new work coming out in November called "The Lighthouse."

"Under My Skin: Volume One of My Autobiography, to 1949, 1995," and **"Walking in the Shade: Volume Two of My Autobiography—1949-1962,"** Doris Lessing 1998.

Lessing grew up in Rhodesia, now called Zimbabwe, under Colonial rule before going to live in Great Britain. Her most famous novel, "The Golden Notebook," was quite radical when it was published in 1962, and considered very influential in the early feminist movement. Although she wrote many novels about women, her autobiography has some extremely controversial and rather frank and uncon-

ventional ideas concerning women and their needs.

"No Hurry to Get Home,"
Emily Hahn, 2000.

This is a collection of essays from 1937 to 1970, which her children compiled. Mickey Hahn, as she was known, was a St. Louis native with a wild streak of wanderlust that even Hollywood might find a bit over the top. From traveling in the Belgian Congo to living in Shanghai in the 1930s, Hahn probably wasn't writing detailed letters back home to mother.

Indeed. While writing for The New Yorker, she smoked opium, learned fluent Mandarin, had a pet monkey, took on the role of a Chinese poet's concubine and occasionally posed nude for Lord Sassoon's private art projects. This was only a practice exercise in life skills that helped her survive the Japanese occupation of Hong Kong. During the occupation, she helped nurse her British spy lover back to health, while at the same time caring for their illegitimate child. Hahn's enterprising nature allowed her to accomplish all of this during wartime shortages. ♦



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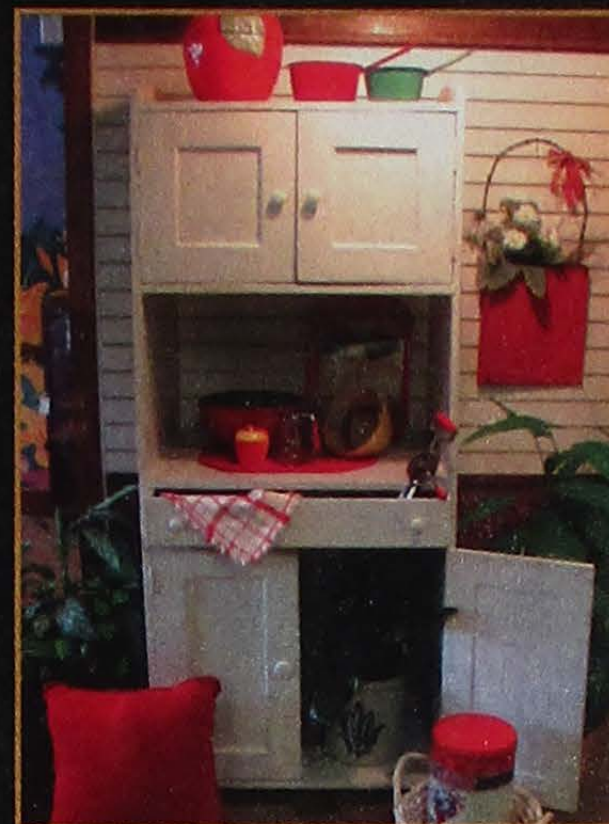
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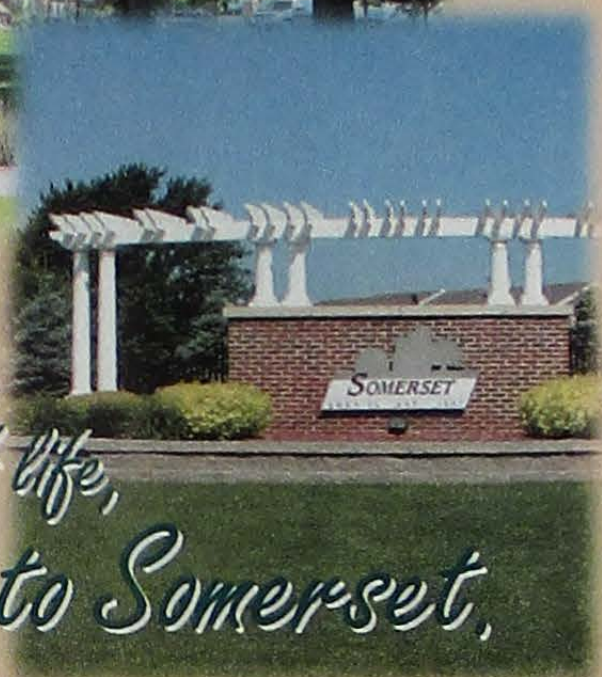
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BEWARE

By Amy Juhnke

While wading through all the spam in your e-mail, have you ever been tempted to respond to an email asking you to "verify your account information?" Identity thieves rely on that momentary twinge of uncertainty to swindle millions of people worldwide with phishing scams.

Phishing is currently the fastest growing form of fraud. This type of scam involves fraudulent emails claiming to originate from financial institutions, government agencies, or other organizations, which ask for the "verification," "update," or "confirmation" of personal financial information. Some of these e-mails even contain Web site graphics and/or corporate logos to make the message seem authentic.

The messages usually contain a link to a Web site, where users are asked to input personal financial information such as account numbers, passwords, PINs, Social Security Numbers, or other items.

Legitimate businesses do not send unsolicited emails that ask you for personal financial informa-

tion. Therefore, treat any unexpected email asking for such information with suspicion. If you receive such an email:

- * Do not click on any links provided in the e-mail. If you are unsure of the validity of the e-mail, call the organization that allegedly sent the e-mail. However, do not use a phone number provided. Use a phone number from your personal files, a phone book, or other trusted source.

- * If you believe the e-mail is a phishing scam, forward the email to spam@uce.gov and to the organization that the e-mail is impersonating. Then delete it as soon as possible.

- * If you believe you have mistakenly provided personal financial information through a phishing scam, contact the organization who allegedly asked for the information to verify whether the request was legitimate. If it was fraudulent, contact your financial institution immediately.

Then contact all three credit bureaus and ask that they place a fraud alert on your credit report (see contact information below). You can also file a complaint at

www.ftc.gov, and visit the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) Identity Theft Web site at www.consumer.gov/idtheft for tips on recovery. Another helpful resource is the Internet Crime Complaint Center at www.ic3.gov.

There are a few basic guidelines that can help you protect yourself from Internet fraud.

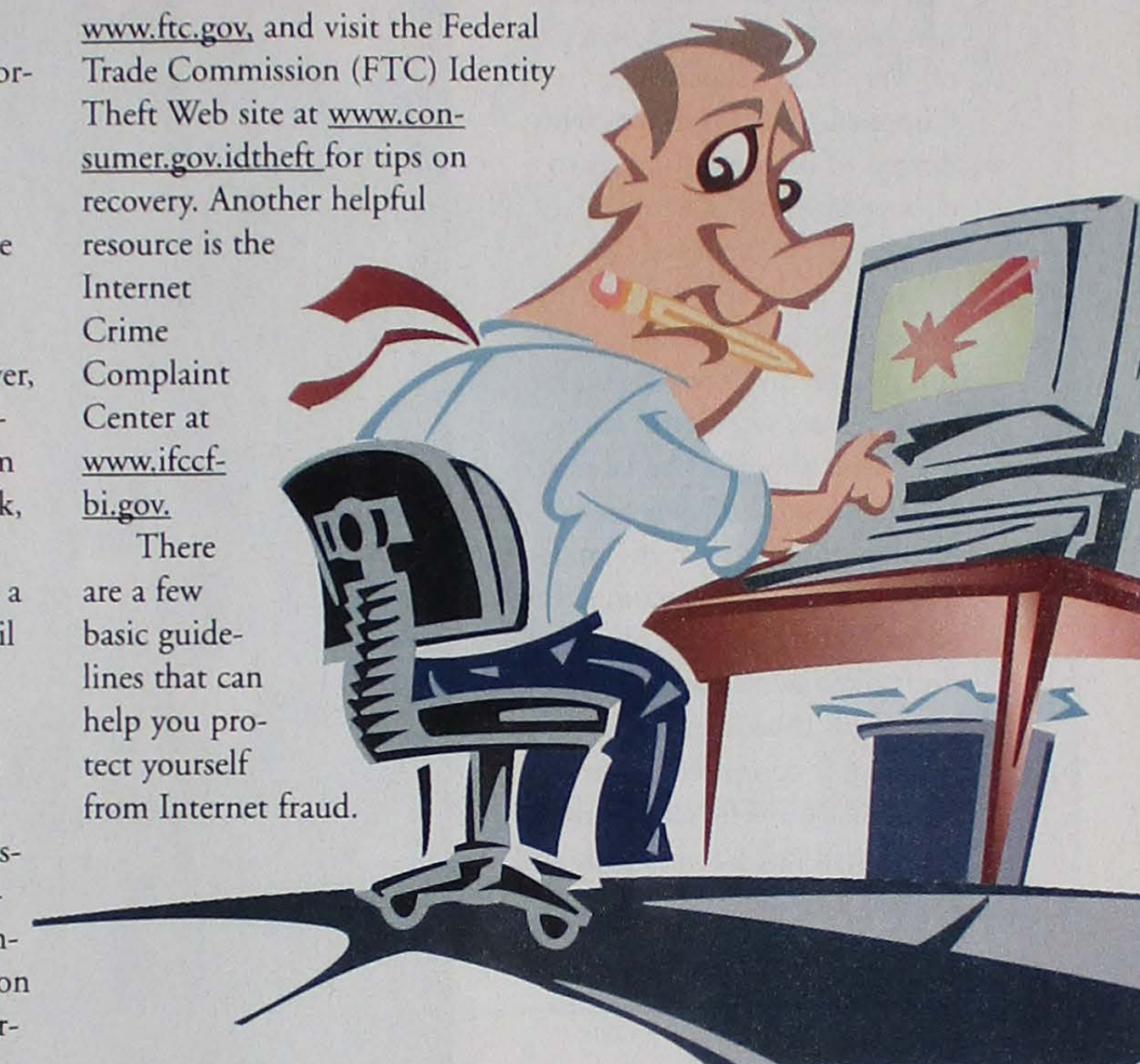
For example, keep your computer current with security updates from your Internet service provider and/or from your operating system manufacturer (i.e. Microsoft, Macintosh, Linux, etc.).

Also, be vigilant in reviewing your credit card, bank account, and other financial statements to verify charges are legitimate. You should also periodically check your credit report for any suspicious activity, such as credit cards or

lines of credit opened in your name that you are not aware of.

You can request one free credit report from each of the three major credit bureaus every year: Equifax (800-525-6285); Experian (888-397-3742); and TransUnion (800-680-7289). You can also visit www.annualcreditreport.com to request your free copies online. ♦

Amy Juhnke is the Director of Marketing & Public Relations for The Greater Iowa Credit Union in Ames.



of Internet FRAUD!

By Frances Wilke

It's too hot to cook. It's too hot to eat. What lovely excuses and terrific reasons why salad should be a part of every cook's repertoire. Chopped fresh vegetables with dozens of oils and vinegars to choose from can make a salad an interesting creation.

Don't stop at lettuce as the main ingredient. Beans, quinoa (pronounced kEn'wa), pasta or couscous are wonderful bases.

Salads shouldn't be labeled as sexist food, but they aren't terribly popular with my male friends. I have heard complaints about texture and the phrase "I don't like raw tomatoes," so I cope with this dilemma by ignoring it completely. It works like a charm. The anti-tomato crowd will just have to pick and chews at my house.

This month, we'll cover only what some consider the most important part — the dressing.

My husband insists that his salads be dressed. Let the rabbits have it naked. Here are several of my favorite standbys.



DRESSED

for

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RECIPES

Simple Vinaigrette
(a.k.a. no garlic,
which means no fun!)

1 tablespoon, prepared Dijon mustard
3 tablespoons lemon juice or any vinegar
1/2 cup oil
1 teaspoon black pepper
1 teaspoon salt

Lou Lou's Killer Vinaigrette

1/3 cup apple vinegar
2/3 cup oil
2 tablespoons maple syrup
One crushed garlic clove
One finely diced shallot
1 tablespoon salt
1 teaspoon black pepper

Creamy dill dressing

1/4 cup sour cream
1/4 cup mayonnaise
2 tablespoons vinegar
3 tablespoons fresh dill
Salt to taste

Skinny Orange Ginger dressing

1/3 cup orange juice
1 teaspoon freshly grated ginger root
2 teaspoons honey
1/2 teaspoon each ground coriander and cumin

Sesame Dressing

3 tablespoons soy Sauce
3 tablespoons honey
1 teaspoon freshly grated ginger root
1 tablespoon sesame oil
1/3 cup peanut oil
1/2 cup rice vinegar
2 green onions, chopped very fine
1 clove crushed garlic

This is nice on salad greens as well as dressing over warm noodles.

Oil & Vinegar

Oils make a difference in the finished product, so use the best you can afford and don't save it for special occasions, as unlike you, oil will not improve with age.

Extra-virgin olive oil is my main oil of choice, but some recipes need the lighter or more neutral (translation, bland) taste of canola oil. If you want to be wild and reminisce about bad new-wave bands and hair of the 1980s, try hazelnut or walnut oil, which was all the rage. Both offer a more complex taste that goes well with fruity vinegar, such as raspberry. Despite your do-it-yourself desire, do not attempt to flavor your own oil with herbs — botulism can and does happen to the best of us.

Vinegar is another important compound. My standbys are rice, apple-cider, sherry and balsamic vinegars. Balsamic vinegar is so fashionable; some claim you can put it on ice cream. Ignore them. I've used inexpensive balsamic vinegar, reduced it to a syrup that was comparable to the ones costing a bomb.

Another trend that food fiends have discovered is how many different fruit vinegars are available. Raspberry, fig, pear, grape and apricot are just few. Since they keep well on the shelf, stock up and experiment. If you want to be extra creative, make your own fruit vinegar with white wine vinegar and fresh or frozen fruit, such as blackberries, raspberries or blueberries. Cover fruit completely with vinegar and let it stand at room temperature for several days. Strain off the fruit flavored vinegar. ♦

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hue & cry

Definition: Any loud clamor or protest intended to incite others to action.

For the love of books

by Heidi Marttila-Losure

Books have always held a special allure for me.

I remember one summer day when I was 10 or 11, I was curled up at the foot of my bed with a good book. I don't remember what it was — perhaps something by Judy Blume, or maybe I was rereading one of our Laura Ingalls Wilder books. My sister came upstairs to ask me to go play outside, and with barely a glance at her, I shooed her away.

"Ugh, you bookworm," she said, and marched out in disgust.

Well, thank heaven I found a job where I can read for a living, as I am just as much of a bookworm now as I was then. If I wasn't reading for work, I'm sure I would get distracted from my work to read!

Of course, reading a newspaper page on a computer screen can't compare to escaping into a comfy chair with a great story. For me, the smell of the books is part of the experience. The slightly stinky scent of a just-printed paperback promises a new adventure, and the faint musty smell of old books is even better — it's the scent of a long-lost treasure just waiting to be found.

Unfortunately, it seems fewer people in the United States are willing to wade into books to search out their treasures. According to a study titled "Reading at Risk" released last year by the National Endowment for the Arts, "for the first time in human history, less than half of the adult population now reads literature, and these trends reflect a larger decline in other sorts of reading."

Just 56.6 percent of the U.S. adult population said in 2002 that they read any book for leisure in the last year, a decline of 7 percent since 1992. And the rate is far greater for readers of literature — 46.7 percent said they read literature, defined as any novel, short story, play, or work of poetry, for leisure, a drop of 14 percent.

Bookworms, it seems, have fallen into the minority. If this was just a matter of fewer people checking out "The Complete Works of William Shakespeare," perhaps only the remaining readers would sigh at their new minority status. (And they might even cheer at less competition at the library.) But a decline in reading correlates with larger societal problems.

Literary readers are more likely to perform volunteer or charity work than non-literary readers (43 percent compared with 17 percent). Higher rates of philanthropy and political engagement also are related to higher rates of literary reading.

Society as a whole is poorer with fewer literary readers taking part in it.

I wanted to take comfort in the fact that more than half of American adults were at least reading some kind of book for leisure, and a recent editorial in The New York Times provided some good news — at least at first glance. The title was "Yes, Obi-Wan, There Still Are Books," and the editorial board wrote: "The good news is that even in this high-tech age, old-fashioned books appear to be holding their own." They were basing this opti-

mism on the fact that consumer spending on books has risen 8 percent in the last three years, to \$21 billion.

I wasn't as enthused with that grand number, however. We are part of a consumer culture, and just because people are buying books, it does not mean they are actually reading them. ("Book acquisition syndrome" can affect the best of us — I have at least a shelf of books that I still have good intentions of reading.)

And the editorial went on to say that higher book prices account for a good share of the increase, and that top-of-the-list books like "The Purpose-Driven Life" and "The Da Vinci Code" are a big chunk of the total.

In other words, we Americans read like we eat: grabbing what's convenient (the bestsellers on the front racks in Borders) and what we know will be good (because why else would all those other people be buying it?).

Booksellers gathering for their annual BookExpo America convention in June heard all about the trend. Instead of browsers who make themselves at home in a book store, perusing the shelves at leisure, more "focused" consumers are coming in the door knowing what they want — which is generally what other people want. Simon & Schuster's CEO calls it "the herding mentality."

At the root of all these trends is a world in which books compete for our leisure time with television, movies, video games and the Internet. And the more these technologies become part of our lives, the more they shape our

attention spans. It gets harder to find the time or the patience to squeeze something as slow moving as a book.

Incorporating books into our lives, on the other hand, does all sorts of good. We learn to be patient, at least a few more hours, to find out what happens to the main character. We can read about people who are less likely to be cookie-cutter stereotypes and more likely to be complicated like those of us residing in the real world, because authors have more time to develop characters than movie directors do. And we get used to viewing the written word as a window to understanding ourselves and the rest of the world.

Each one of those side effects of reading translate to greater success in life — in our relationships, jobs and responsibilities as citizens of the world.

But I think the best aspect of reading is just the pure joy of being absorbed in a great story. And I'm optimistic that once a person gets turned on to that part of a book's appeal, it won't be easy to shake, even in our technological world. Because for all the attractions of TV, movies and the Internet, I've never heard anyone say they were overcome with nostalgia over the scent of their new video game.

They may be old-fashioned, but books have some charms that just can't be matched. Ask a bookworm or two — I'm sure they'll tell you all about it. ♦

Heidi Marttila-Losure is a copy editor at The Tribune.



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